



March 2, 2000

VIA FACSIMILE: 404-658-9022

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EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

Dear Bennett:

9800123

Your letter withdrawing from further "settlement discussions" was disappointing, and, candidly, surprising, considering that the issues you raise – such as whether BellSouth is providing parity on CLEC local call quality, whether BellSouth should be properly implementing CNAM for ported numbers, and whether BellSouth is providing accurate call information for billing purposes to CLECs and independents in the local calling area – are not the subject of any formal complaint such that our discussions were settlement negotiations, but, rather, are issues of BellSouth's compliance with the requirements of our interconnection agreement and the Telecommunications Act. Quite frankly, we are surprised that BellSouth would refuse to discuss operational issues affecting end users simply because NEXTLINK responded to BellSouth's motion regarding two of those issues in our pending arbitration.

It might be helpful to recall that BellSouth, not NEXTLINK, sought to litigate, or more specifically, relitigate, the issues of reciprocal compensation and multiple tandem access at the Tennessee Regulatory Authority after those issues had been jointly filed for approval as part of our arbitrated interconnection agreement. NEXTLINK, at Bell's request, agreed to add those issues to the ongoing discussions between our companies, and to attempt in good faith to resolve those issues. In our first conference call, however, the only new item BellSouth brought to the table regarding either of these issues was the revelation that BellSouth's refusal to provide multiple tandem access would extend to intraLATA multiple tandem access as well, despite explicit language to the contrary contained in BellSouth's own motion before the TRA.

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It appears that BellSouth felt it had made a mistake when it agreed to the language in the filed interconnection agreement, and also made a mistake in drafting the language proposed in its own motion. Your letter states that, despite either version of the multiple tandem access language, BellSouth could not and would not provide multiple tandem access for access traffic. In short, BellSouth would be asking the TRA not only to reject the language in the filed interconnection agreement, but also the alternative language filed in BellSouth's own motion.

In response to your "offer" that essentially represents an opportunity to agree to BellSouth's new position; NEXTLINK directed our outside counsel to call you and Guy Hicks to inform you that NEXTLINK felt it had no choice but to preserve its rights and respond to BellSouth's pending motion on these two issues.

Your mischaracterization of NEXTLINK's action as "forcing BellSouth to litigate before the Authority issues that are of concern to BellSouth" is patently unfair and misleading. All of the issues on the table are of concern to NEXTLINK, and most of the issues have been under discussion between our two companies for quite some time, with no apparent progress toward resolution. In the face of BellSouth's implied threat to "stack arms" should NEXTLINK approach the TRA for resolution of interconnection issues NEXTLINK has had no choice but to continue protracted discussions that have provided no resolution to the outstanding issues. As of this date, the TRA has no formal complaint on which it can act, despite the existence of important issues affecting the development of competition in Tennessee.

I propose, by copy of this letter, to make the Authority aware of BellSouth's actions and to ask that pending matters in our arbitration be docketed for hearing at the Authority's earliest convenience. Thank you for your correspondence confirming BellSouth's position.

Sincerely,

Dana Shaffer, Esq.
Vice President, Regulatory Affairs

cc: Tennessee Regulatory Authority